Table of Contents

1. Allegiences
2. Chapter 1
3. Chapter 2
4. Chapter 3
5. Chapter 4
6. Chapter 5
7. Chapter 6
8. Chapter 7
9. Chapter 8
10. Chapter 9
11. Chapter 10 (special)
12. Chapter 11
13. Chapter 12
14. Chapter 13
15. Chapter 14
16. Chapter 15
17. Chapter 16
18. Epilogue

Allegiences

DewClan
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Leader- Lemurstar- white she cat with an orange striped tail. Mates with Badgerfang

Deputy- Badgerfang- b&w tom with a broken jaw

MC- Sunsetpool- shy honey colored she cat

MCA-

Warriors-

Firegaze- white tom with fire yellow eyes

Creamspots- cream tom with a fluffy black tipped tail and blue eyes. Mates with Turtleface.

Gilafang- strong brown tom with tangerine markings and a strong jaw

Weaselfoot- short brown tom with fluffy tail and stout legs.

Apprentices-

Wishpaw- silver tabby she cat with bright blue eyes. M: Firegaze

Blackpaw- white she cat with a black striped tail and a black star on her chest. M: Lemurstar

Faithpaw- grey tabby tom with dark stripes and amber eyes. Runt. M: Weaselfoot

Timberpaw- brown rustic colored she cat with vibrant blue eyes. M: Badgerfang

Viperpaw- brown tom identical to his sister except for his stunning amber eyes. M: Gilafang

Queens-

Turtleface- dappled brown she cat. Mates with Creamspots

Drizzle- shy one eyed she cat that barely talks. Nursing Snowdrop, Speckle, Dew, and Dusty

Kits-

Mosskit- dappled calico she cat

Pebblekit- stone colored tom

Snowdrop- white she cat with a black dot on her muzzle and ice blue eyes

Dew- shy she cat with grey tabby markings

Speckle- spotted black and grey tom with blue eyes

Dusty- pale orange tom with green eyes

Chapter 1

Pain. Torture. Suffering.

These were the only things that crossed through Wishpaw's mind. Over and over, she faced her worst fears, she saw her love die, she even had to watch herself kill him..... Over and over, to no end.

Pain. Torture.

Suffering.

*****

Gilafang lay in his nest, shoving away the half eaten mouse from the morning. It had been half a moon since Wishpaw's nightmare began, and every day, every second, it made Gilafang more guilty and heart-wrenched than before. He knew he had to do what Morningstar had told him, and as soon as he did, his love would be released. But his instructions were too horrible.

He had been ordered to kill. To kill, and frame. To kill, frame, and then kill again.

He closed his eyes, his heart tearing in two as Wishpaw let out an ear splitting screech. The nightmares were worsening, Gilafang's warning. He knew he was running out of time, and if he didn't do it soon, Wishpaw would die a most painful death. His heart split in two at the thought, and he let out a sob.

Gilafang felt horrible. He was trapped, stuck. He didn't know what to do...

He felt the weight of his instructions bear down on his shoulders like another cat, pinning him, dragging him down in the everlasting battle against his mother. Would he never be free of her?

Gilafang looked up as Mosskit barreled into him, locked in a tussle with her brother, Pebblekit. Her cries rattled Gilafang's ears.

"Die, AirClan intruder! I'm Mossstar, leader of DewClan! You'll pay for attacking the greatest clan of all, Pebblestar!" She roared. Snowkit and Dustykit trailed behind her, Drizzledawn's kits.

Pebblekit pinned his sister, and Snowkit moved in to bat at her head. "Not if I win, Mossstar!" He growled. "Snowdrop is the best deputy I've ever known!"

Their loud yowls faded as Gilafang got up, dragging his paws outside. He needed some fresh air. Lemurstar immediately approached him, a worried look in her eyes.

"Gilafang, I'm worried about you." She said gently. Gilafang stared blankly ahead and pushed past her, ignoring her. He knew what she was going to say, and he had no intention of listening to her lectures once again. But Lemurstar sidestepped, blocking his path. She stared at him sternly.

"Gilafang, you're starving. You need to eat, you've barely touched a single mouse for a half moon!" She said, her eyes wide with worry. She watched him like a hawk. "Your ribs are showing!"

Gilafang stared at her. His eyes hardened and she thrust his nose closer to Lemurstar. "How can I eat when my best friend is being tortured?" He growled. "You expect me to live on as if nothing is wrong while she is in *pain?!* You expect me to ignore the fact that we can't save her?" His voice wavered, and angry tears filled his eyes. He pushed Lemurstar away.

"You don't know *anything!"*

*****

Another day passed. Gilafang was so weak he could barely stand. He was punishing himself, he knew Wishpaw's condition was his fault alone. And yet, he refused to help her. He just couldn't do it. He couldn't.

Lemurstar had spoken to Sunsetpool, and she had slept beside Gilafang that night, coaxing him to eat his mouse. Reluctantly, he had finished the whole thing, but then promptly vomited half of it

up. Sunsetpool hadn't complained, just cleaned it up and given him a poppy and some thyme, along with some other herbs he didn't recognize. He had licked them up without protest, too tired to try to resist. He then had fallen asleep, and woken up with an empty stomach and a memory of a nightmare, where Wishpaw had been released, only to morph into Morningstar and pin him, torturing him and spitting,

"*YOU'RE PATHETIC, YOU STUPID LOVESICK TOM!"*

He had woken up in the middle of the night, and the next time he closed his eyes, he woke up in the Dark Forest. An angry Morningstar awaited him.

He padded up to her, his eyes hard. He was stronger in his dream, normal and healthy. He glared at his mother.

Morningstar spat at him. "What gives?!" She snarled, her eyes blazing. Gilafang stared angrily at her.

"I refuse. I can't just murder some cat that I've known all my life!" He retorted, pausing to spit at Morningstar's paws. "I defied you once, I can defy you again! Just let Wishpaw go!" He cried.

Morningstar's eyes narrowed cruelly. She smiled, and stepped to the side to reveal a dark green-blue tornado of cloudy mist, with a trembling silver figure inside. A scream of pain erupted from inside, and Gilafang recognized Wishpaw. He growled. Something inside him snapped, and he screeched with fury.

"Stop *mocking me!!"* He screeched, and leaped at his mother. She easily stepped aside, her paws dancing just out of Gilafang's angry reach. Morningstar smirked.

"If you want Wishpaw, you'll have to go in and get her! If you succeed, you get her back. But if you don't, she'll be killed and you'll be punished!" Morningstar challenged. "Or, you can do as I ask and get her back, unharmed." She growled. "Take your pick. But I won't wait forever and then I'll choose for you."

Gilafang stared hard at her. "Fine. But if she has one tiny cut on her

pelt when I get her back, I'll kill you a thousand times over, you understand?!" He snarled, sheathing his claws. "I'll never forgive you!"

Morningstar bat her eyelashes innocently. "Of course. Now get back. I'll heal you and you can get going. You have another moon. The longer you wait, the weaker Wishpaw'll get, and eventually she will die. The minute the sun sets on the last day, shes mine forever. Go, and may the blood of many rest in your paws."

And she vanished.

Chapter 2

The turquoise mist swirled around Wishpaw as she struggled to fight the urge to let go. Her heart whipped in her chest so fast she thought it would pound a hole in her, and she clutched it in effort to slow it. Then she stopped, looking up. The horror had paused. Nothing but the wind in-prisoning her inside the nightmares that waited for her was there, only the boom of the wind as it whipped past her ears could be heard. Wishpaw sat down, glaring in he general direction she thought Morningstar was in.

"Show yourself, coward!" She tried to croak, but her mew was lost in the wind. Suddenly she felt a prod in her belly, and the strength of it caught her off guard and she staggered. She felt another prod and she gasped. *What is she doing to me now?*

Suddenly a cackle rang clearly in the air. It rattled Wishpaw's eardrums, and she lifted her tear-stained face and glared defiantly in the direction of the sound. Morningstar materialized in front of her, and the wind subsided. Finally free of the whipping wind that she had fought against for half a moon, Wishpaw fell, weak and useless.

Morningstar forced her up roughly with unsheathed claws. "Your getting a break," she said flatly, throwing her down in a crudely made nest. "Sleep. You need energy to stay alive."

Wishpaw was taken aback. "*Alive?"* She croaked, angry. "You wouldn't care weather I live or die anyways!" She retorted, her gaze cruel and sharp. Morningstar purred in a honey-coated tone.

"You must live until the full moon, and if Gilafang hasn't done my bidding by then, I wouldn't give two mouse tails what happens to *you."* She said as a matter-of-fact. "Now shut up and sleep."

*****

Sleep came within a heartbeat. A long, dreamless sleep that felt like

bliss after nothing but torture for the past half moon. If it never ended, it would still be too soon. Suddenly a sharp, rough claw jabbed her side.

"Up, scum. Time for more nightmares." Came a gruff voice. Wishpaw groaned as another prod jabbed her belly from the inside, and got unsteadily to her paws, trailing after Morningstar dejectedly. *StarClan save me...* She thought to herself, but she didn't even think StarClan could hear her in this wretched place. No one was going to save her. She was going to die here, alone, in pain.

Without her beloved Gilafang.

*****

Gilafang woke, and Sunsetpool stirred beside him. She opened her eyes wide in shock.

"You're all better! Wow, I guess the herbs worked. That was fast...." She licked her brother's forehead. "I have to talk to you, I'm worried about Wishpaw," she said in a hushed tone. Gilafang's eyes flew wide open. He stared at her.

"What? Whats wrong? Is she okay?" He whispered frantically, his eyes wide with fear. *Am I too late? Did Morningstar lie?!* A dozen scenarios flew into his mind of what had happened.

Morningstar could have changed her mind, tired of waiting, and just killed Wishpaw. Gilafang quickly canceled this one out. Sunsetpool had said she was worried, not sorry. That wouldn't make any sense.

Morningstar could, however, worsen her nightmares until she died from exhaustion, pain, or maybe even just fear. The thought twisted Gilafang's heart. *It's all my fault.....*

"Gilafang! Come!" Sunsetpool's voice broke his bubble of thoughts and he stared blankly at her.

"Well? What's wrong?" He demanded, as he trailed after her. His paws were wobbly with their sudden strength, but he ignored it.

They reached the medicine den where Wishpaw lay, twitching and crying out like a kit dreaming. Gilafang's heart broke and he looked away, squeezing his eyes shut.

"Did you take me here for any other reason than to force me to watch her die?" He choked out, tears in his eyes. Sunsetpool touched her tail to his shoulder.

"I'm sorry, Gilafang. But I need to show you something. Come," she waved her tail gently to indicate for him to follow. Reluctantly, Gilafang moved to Wishpaw's twitching side, and looked more closely at her face.

It was contorted with pain, beads of sweat pouring off of every hair on her pelt. Gilafang fought the urge to whack his sister with anger, angry that she had made him see this.

"Here," Sunsetpool said gently, taking Gilafang's paws in her own. She took them, and guided them in Wishpaw's belly. "Can you feel them?" She whispered, anxious.

Gilafang glared. "No! What am I feeling for, anyways? Can I please go? I don't enjoy watching my love being tortured!" He snapped, and immediately regretted it. His face softened. "Sorry. I'm just worried, and I can't bear to see her like this." He added apologetically. Sunsetpool gave a tiny smile, acknowledging him.

"Gilafang, concentrate. Feel those lumps in her belly?" She pushed harder on his paws, and a mouse-sized ball hit Gilafang's outstretched paws. He jumped, afraid this was some sort of sickness. Another ball, and another, he felt five balls, all the same size.

"Is she sick?! What's wrong?!" He demanded, panicky. *Morningstar gave her some deadly stomach disease!* He screeched in his mind. A red haze of fury clouded his vision, and he didn't notice Sunsetpool gently guiding him out of the den and towards the nursery.

When he was settled in his nest, he looked up at Sunsetpool with wide, tired eyes.

"What's going to happen to her?" He whispered in fear. Sunsetpool gave both a worried and pleased look.

"Don't you understand, brother?" She purred. Gilafang couldn't imagine why she was so happy. Then she answered his questions with one single sentence.

"Its Wishpaw! Gilafang, she's expecting!"

Chapter 3

A/N: lets just say it takes one and a half moons for kits to arrive. I dont wanna wait for too long haha

*****

Wishpaw's belly was filled with more unbearable pain. She clutched it, trying to will it away as she dragged herself after Morningstar. Morningstar stopped, and smiled, her cruel grin widening across her face.

"I knew it!" She hissed. Wishpaw glared up at her through the pain. She had also just figured it out, and felt angrier than ever.

"You lay a claw on them, I'll personally torture you just as you are me." She spat through clenched teeth. She knew her kits wern't due for awhile, since she had only just slept with her beloved Gilafang in the last moon. They would be due in a half moon, hopefully she would be out of this dump by then. She struggled to her paws, clenching her teeth.

Morningstar apparently got impatient and moved behind Wishpaw, shoving her roughly ahead and grumbling to herself. They trudged on in this manner until they reached a dark tree, with curling fingers and intertwining brambles. It looked like a prison. Morningstar shoved Wishpaw inside an opening, and almost immediately the brambles closed in on her, blocking her escape. She felt her fur lift as a strong wind suddenly whisked towards her. *No, not again!* She thought frantically. The wind swirled its way around her in a turquoise tornado. She fought the mist shrouding her vision, but she was too weak. She collapsed, and the last thing she heard was Morningstar's cackle.

"Sleep tight! Don't let the *nightmares bite!"* She mocked, and then the darkness slammed down on Wishpaw, and she welcomed it.

*****

Gilafang paced the floor. It was almost sunhigh. Today, Blackpaw and Faithpaw were having their assessments. Lemurstar had asked Gilafang to assess her firstborn son, because she thought he needed the exercise. *This is your chance....* Said a voice in his head. *You can get Wishpaw back tonight!*

Gilafang growled. *Stop it!!* He screamed to himself. *I can't do this!*

She'll die if you don't. Do it. DO IT. The voice cried. It filled his head with guilt and determination, anger and excitement. *You can get her back and safe. Go.*

Gilafang closed his eyes. "I must. I'm sorry, Wishpaw." He whispered and bounded out of the camp after Faithpaw.

*****

Easy, Gilafang... He coached himself as he stalked his prey. The apprentices scent wreathed his nose. *Easy now.* He stalked ever so slowly through his cover, silently slithering across the ground like a ghost. The moon shone high above him. His heart pounded. *Forgive me!* He cried in his mind, readying to pounce.

He leaped gracefully out of the shadows. His victims eyes widened in fear as he spun around, tail bristling. Gilafang pinned him, his eyes wide.

"I-I'm sorry," he whimpered, his eyes wide as he raised a paw to deliver the death blow. He heard a whimper and a scream cut short as he slammed his paw on the cat's skull, his eyes closed. He felt his stomach curdle when he opened his eyes.

The cat, laying bloody and dead at his paws, was Faithpaw.

*****

Gilafang looked one more time over Faithpaw's body. He had stuck Creamspot's fur into Faithpaw's claws, and rubbed it all over his fur. Then he had rubbed onions all over the body, and washed himself clean. He closed his eyes.

Are you happy, Mother? I'm a murderer like you. He thought bitterly

and let a tear fall from his eyes. *I'm a murderer.*

He dragged himself back to camp, and put a sorrowful look on his face. Lemurstar immediately ran to his side. She covered him in licks.

"Gilafang, where have you been? Its almost sunset! Where's my son?" She asked, her eyes wide. "Where's Faithpaw?"

Gilafang put on an angry face. It was easy, he was already smothered with fury. He stared straight at Lemurstar.

"Faithpaw... He was... Murdered..." He choked out, disgusted with his act. It seemed realistic. Lemurstar stared at him, her mouth open wide. She collapsed at Gilafang's paws.

"No... He can't be-" she whispered, staring at the ground. "No!" Badgerfang moved closer to comfort his mate, resting his tail on her shoulder. He looked sternly at Gilafang.

"Who?" He said simply, his meow low in a growl. It boomed in Gilafang's ears. He flattened his ears, shrinking back ever so slightly. *Me. I'm so sorry... I have to do this!* He wanted to scream, but he controlled himself.

"It was Creamspots."

*****

Dun dun dunnn! Wow this was a hard chap to write. I'm still figuring out how to continue xD any ideas are welcome, pm me if you have one pls pls!

Chapter 4

Turtleface stepped protectively in front of Creamspots. "Your lying. He would never kill anyone." She challenged, staring at Lemurstar. "He's lying. I can see it in his eyes. *Guilt."* She spat the words out of her mouth like prey.

Gilafang cringed, grinding his teeth. *I'm sorry, Creamspots! I have to!* He cried silently. *StarClan help me!* His paws kneaded the earth as he watched Lemurstar get to her paws, eyes stony and hard. She marched up to Creamspots, who's face was wide in confusion and horror. He backed away from Lemurstar, shaking his head.

Lemurstar growled. "You were out on patrol while they were out. *And* you're not Clan-Born. You're a *kittypet!"* She snarled in his face. Turtleface stepped between her sister and her mate.

"Lemurstar, you don't actually believe...?" She whispered, staring at her in shock. "He's not a murderer! He's my *mate!"* She said, her voice rising. Lemurstar pulled her away, looking sorrowfully into her sister's eyes.

"I'm sorry, Turtleface. I would trust Gilafang with my life. He has to be telling the truth, why would he lie?" She whispered sadly. Turtleface stared in horror at Lemurstar, then gazed around at the clan.

"D-Do you *all* believe him?" She ventured, spinning around. Gilafang gulped. He hated this. *It's for Wishpaw! I'm saving her life!* He reminded himself before he blurted out what he had done. *I hate you Mother!* He wanted to scream. *This is your fault!*

The clan was bowing their heads, nodding solemnly. Turtleface curled her tail around Creamspots. "No! He would never hurt anyone! Not my sisters son, nor a stranger! How can you believe this?!" She yowled, tears in her eyes. "Lemurstar, do something!"

Lemurstar grabbed her sister and pushed her back into the crowd,

despite her desperate yowls. She bowed her head, as if she were in pain, and stepped up to Creamspots. Her head was level with his as she said, almost in a growl: "You will pay for my son's death."

Creamspots stared at her with an open mouth. "I don't know what y'all're talking about!!! I-I wouldn't lay a claw on him!" He turned to Weaselfoot beside him. "Help me, Weaselfoot!" He choked, staring expectantly at his friend.

Weaselfoot looked harshly at Creamspots. "I don't know *what* to believe anymore," he said coldly, and whipped around to soothe Turtleface, leaving Creamspots shocked as ever. Lemurstar leaped up to the great rock.

"I declare that this murderer shall be exiled!" She yowled, her eyes narrowed and stony. She glared at the rest of the kittypets, watching fearfully. "We made a *mistake* bringing you here. We should have never trusted such filth." She growled. "All the kittypets are now under strict watch. None of you are allowed to leave camp without three warriors."

Turtleface stared at Lemurstar angrily. "I can't believe you. I *thought* you'd understand!" She snarled. "But now I understand how much you don't trust my mate. If he leaves, *I* leave too. I'll never forget this, sister." She flanked Creamspots defiantly as they were escorted out of camp.

Gilafang watched, shifting his paws guiltily as his friends left. Badgerfang licked Gilafang behind the ears, explaining that he would never be out of his debt. Blackpaw lashed her ringed tail and glared at the entrance, muttering something about *fox-dunged mouse breath* and how she would go after them someday to avenge her brother. But all Gilafang could think about is what he had done. *It's not your fault, Gilafang. It's Morningstar's.* He tried to tell himself, over and over.

But he just couldn't believe it.

*****

Gilafnag helped Lemurstar bury Faithpaw, the guilt dripping from

his pelt. After moonhigh, he went to visit Wishpaw, who was surprisingly calmer. She had stopped twitching, Sunsetpool had said she's been this calm only since Creamspots and Turtleface had left. Gilafang breathed a sigh of relief.

You have done good, my son. A whispy voice said in his mind. *Very good.*

Gilafang licked Wishpaw's forehead lovingly, curling around her protectively. He was exhausted, tired, guilty, and worried. What if Lemurstar found out? He could be killed, exiled, or inprisoned. Even worse, Wishpaw wouldn't trust him. He sighed, tears filling his eyes. *I had to do it..... It was the only way to save Wishpaw!* He told himself again. He felt cold with despair. The last thing he thought before the cold emptiness of sleep lugged him away was Faithpaw's terrorized eyes as he cowered beneath him, begging for mercy.

Chapter 5

Morningstar purred, running her soft tail under Gilafang's chin. She cooed. "You did *excellent*, my dear," her voice dripping with pleasure. Gilafang glared at her, teeth clenched. He let out a growl.

"*Don't push it."* He snarled, his eyes hard. "I'm *not* happy with this."

Morningstar stuck out her bottom lip, staring at him with wide, innocent eyes. "What?" She asked, overdramatizing a fake disbelief. Gilafang ground his paws angrily into the dirt. Pushing past her, he stomped to the prison where Wishpaw was being held. The turquoise mist swirling around her whipped his long fur into his eyes. He pressed his nose against the brambles.

Wishpaw lay whimpering in the center of the wind, paws over her ears. Tears stained her cheeks, and she let out a cry of pain. Gilafang felt tears prickle his own eyes, and he stuck a paw inside. He rested it on Wishpaw's shaking shoulders, but she was oblivious. With a sigh, he closed his eyes, a single tear dripping off his cheek.

"I'll get you out soon, Wishpaw. I promise," he whispered. Suddenly he felt harsh paws grab his tail and pull him away roughly.

Morningstar's jaw was set. "Time's up. Lets discuss the next part of out plan." She said, leading Gilafang away.

*****

Wishpaw screamed. "Gilafang! N-No, please! It's me, Wishpaw!" She whimpered, staring up at her mate. Gilafang's eyes were red with fury, and he was towering over her, paws strongly pinning her down. He growled.

"You killed Sunsetpool!" He accused, raising a paw to claw her cheek. Blood seeped slowly out of the scratch, oozing pitifully. Another sob escaped Wishpaw as Gilafang battered her head against the ground. "I hate you! I'll kill you! No- I'll torture your kits one by

one, forcing you to watch! Salmonkit, Heronkit! Get your *sorry* rumps over here!" He snapped, not taking his eyes from Wishpaw.

"Gilafang, please! I would never hurt Sunsetpool!" Wishpaw begged, sobbing louder. "Don't hurt our kits!" She knew this wasn't real, but only in the back of her mind. Her thoughts were subdued, the only thing she could feel was the pain of her heart breaking over, and over again.

Gilafang yowled with fury and hooked Heronkit up with a claw. He squealed, whimpered, and fearfully swatted at the air. Gilafang threw him down, slamming on the ground. He smiled when Heronkit squealed with pain, yelping and hurrying to scramble away. Gilafang dug a claw into the base of his tail, and the howl of pain echoing after was enough to make Wishpaw's ears bleed with horror.

"No! Gilafang, *please!"* She sobbed, her voice cracking. She gasped with pain, dragging herself between them. "Please, stop!"

Gilafang stared at her, his eyes cold. They were filled with the look of pure joy. He knew he had absolute power over her. He cooed in a voice honey sweet and cruel at the same time.

"I *like* when you beg," he whispered. Staring into her soul, cutting into her like a thousand knives, he raised a paw, ready to slam it down on Heronkit. "*Do it again*." His eyes dared her to do his command, watching her hungrily.

Wishpaw closed her eyes, almost unable to control her sobs. She crouched down, as if kneeling to a leader's power. Barely able to choke it out, she said, "Please, Gilafang. Don't kill him, I-I'll do anything...." She whispered, staring straight at his bloodred eyes. He grinned.

"*No*." He said flatly, and slammed his paw onto Heronkit. Then he moved to Salmonkit. He killed each one, then moved to face Wishpaw. Raising a paw, he exploded it down on Wishpaw, and the darkness opened, sending her whirling to the next nightmare.

= =

SORRY GUYS its so short ugh. I cant think of anything more to do. So here xD

Chapter 6

Sunsetpool lay in her nest, sorting herbs. *Chervil goes there...* The thought to herself. *Then borage, comfery, blackberry leaves, poppy seeds-* her thoughts were cut off as a scuffling of paws sounded at the door. She looked up to see Viperpaw. Spitting out the leaf in her jaw, she smiled.

"What can I do for you, Viperpaw?" She asked, her blue eyes sparkling kindly. Viperpaw smiled shyly and held out a paw.

"Uh... I stepped on a thorn," he mumbled. "Can you fix it?" He shuffled his paws awkwardly. Sunsetpool purred, twitching her whiskers in amusement. She moved closer to them, and accidentally bumped his flank with hers. She shuffled backward swiftly, trodding on the herbs behind her.

"Oh, dear me! I-I'm such a clumsy fool-" she stammered, feeling flustered. She fumbled for the right herb, marigold, and stuck it in her mouth before she said anything more stupid in front of the apprentice. She chewed it to a pulp, and stared at the paw outstretched in front of her, ready to put her face in her paws. She sighed. She had forgotten to pull out the thorn, and now she had to spit out the marigold in her mouth and re-chew it. She quickly grabbed a large beech leaf behind her, spitting it out sheepishly.

"S-Sorry, I'm flustered today-" she mumbled and closed her teeth around the thorn. She tugged it out without a hitch, spitting it on the ground and moving to lick up the pulp on the beech leaf behind her. She spat the pulp on the wound and licked it vigorously. When she had finished, she grabbed a wad of cobweb hanging off the ceiling, and wrapped the paw.

"There. Try not to walk on it too much," She said as she sat back down. She had been so flustered lately. Creamspots' leaving had troubled her, for she had noticed a tiny cloud of stars wreathing around his paws as he left with Turtleface. It had taken a cat's shape, and shaken it's head, looking at Gilafang. The thought had

troubled her.

She *knew* Creamspots was not responsible for Faithpaw's death. But if he wasn't, who was? Why had the starry shape looked at her brother? The thought that followed made her blood churn.

Maybe he *did it,* said a voice in the back of her mind. She immediately felt sick with herself. Her brother wasn't a killer. He wouldn't hurt anyone!

Morningstar would gladly do it... But she's dead. Stop jumping to conclusions, Sunsetpool!

She sighed, collecting her herbs. She needed rest. The she stopped, staring open mouthed in horror.

Sitting in front of her was a tiny flower, delicate as a butterfly. It was impaling a thick, dark substance, that reminded Sunsetpool of a shadow. She frowned, trying to pull the two apart, but as soon as she touched it, her eyes flew open wide, and the world seemed to spin, plunging her into a dark vision.

*****

Sunsetpool stood up, shaking her head. It felt woozy and fuzzy. The ground beneath her was sticky and muddy, reeking of blood. She curled her lip to urge away the scent, trying not to breathe too hard. She took a cautious step, yelping when the ground squelched ever so slightly under her.

Suddenly her ears pricked. She heard faint voices, familiar. She crept stealthily towards the sounds, and into view came a huge tree, the brambles and vines on it intertwining with each other to form a wall in front of each opening. Two cats stood in front of it, one a brown tom and the other a tabby. Their faces were too far away to recognize, but something about the tom puzzled her in the back of her mind. She ignored it, pushing the thought away. It was too absurd.

The tom placed his paw on one cage, bowing his head. The wind around the cage whipped his long fuzzy fur around his face.

Suddenly the tabby grabbed the tom's tail and dragged him away, his paws flailing as he tried desperately to get back to the tree. *Must be some sort of prison... Maybe that cat is trying to control the tom.* She thought, puzzled.

The wind around her *whooshed,* and Sunsetpool was now standing inside the tree in her own prison. She looked at her paws, surprised to see instead of gentle honey colored paws, she had white and grey ones. *Someone else.* The thought came automatically.

The wind whipped around her fur. She felt an overwhelming sense of fear, pain, and horror. She whimpered, covering her face in her paws. Screams ripped her ears in half, and reached up to cover them, letting out a scream of her own. A bone chilling voice laughed, mocking her. Tears streamed down her face. Then all was still, and the shadow engulfed her.

The voice spoke through the darkness.

The shadowed nightmare will shroud the clan in darkness, and the night will last in eternal pain and suffering. Screams will echo from mouthless voices, and pain will exist in infinity.

The delicate flower may seem weak, but sometimes the weakest are the most invincible.

Chapter 7

Gilafang sat down, curling his tail around his paws. He looked up with proud eyes as newly named Blackflower stepped back to let Mosskit and Pebblekit step up towards the great rock. Lemurstar looked sad and tired, the dark circles under her eyes apparent even from Gilafang's place near the back of the clearing.

"Mosskit, you shall be Mosspaw. My daughter Blackflower, though newly named, shall mentor you, and I trust her to teach you all she knows." Lemurstar rested her head on Mosspaw's forehead, who licked her shoulder in return and bounded over to her new mentor. Gilafang heard her squeal questions before Blackflower shushed her gently.

"Pebblekit, do you wish to learn the ways of healing, and have the strongest connection of all with StarClan?" She asked. Pebblekit nodded proudly. Lemurstar dipped her head to Sunsetpool, who hurried to take Lemurstar's place. She continued, naming Pebblekit Pebblepaw, and the two cats trotted back towards Gilafang at the mouth of the medicine den.

"Clan dismissed," Lemurstar mumbled, half falling, half jumping down from the great rock in a daze. She numbly retreated to her den and didn't come out. Gilafang gave a puzzling look to Sunsetpool and Pebblepaw.

"What was *that* all about?" He asked in a hushed tone. It had been a few days since Creamspots and Turtleface had left. Lemurstar had been wrecked with grief after their departure, and stayed in her den always. But she should be over it by now.... Right?

Sunsetpool sighed. "She's wasting away, Gilafang. I'm afraid with Leaf-bare coming that she might get sick, and you never want that, especially when theres a murderer on the loose-" she sighed deeply again. "Plus-" Sunsetpool lowered her voice. Her gaze darted around as if she were looking for someone. Pebblepaw watched curiously.

"What, Sunsetpool? What's wrong?" He ventured quietly, eyes wide and round as moons. Sunsetpool ushered them inside hastily. She had a worried look on her face.

"I had a dream last night..." She said finally, staring at Gilafang. "I saw this-" she gestured with her tail at a tiny pink flower that Gilafang thought would surely turn to dust if he so much as breathed on it. "-Stuck in a shadow. When I touched it, I had a vision, and I'm not sure what it means..." She said. Then she shifted her paws nervously. "I should talk to Lemurstar first, but I don't know if she's well enough."

Gilafang's heart lurched. *A shadow? Could it be me?* He felt his pelt prickle and he forced his fur back flat against his skin. "I think you should tell Lemurstar first, Sunsetpool. Even if she isn't well, she needs to know. Badgerfang too." Gilafang suggested despite the lump in his throat. Sunsetpool gave him a peculiar look but said nothing.

"You're right. I'll speak to her immediately." She concluded, hurrying outside. "Stay with Wishpaw." She called, and she was gone.

*****

Gilafang felt angry as he appeared in the Dark Forest. This was not him. He was kind. He wasn't a lying, cowardly killer. He was a kind cat, and he wasn't going to let his mother change him. He wasn't.

He marched up to her, eyes narrowed. "Morningstar, I want to talk to you." He said flatly. His tail lashed in the mucky dirt. Morningstar turned her head from where she was, in front of a small apprentice the size of Mosspaw. She looked scared, crouching in the earth with countless scratches. Gilafang felt more anger fuel him, and he growled.

"Go home." He commanded the apprentice, and her black pelt fluffed up and she immediately disappeared, returning to the living world. Morningstar glared at him.

"Hey! What's with you today?!" She retorted angrily. "Jaypaw and I

were training!"

Gilafang put his paw on his mother's tail, holding her back. "We need to talk. Now." He growled. She rolled her eyes and followed him.

"*What?"* She said, putting on a bored look, plopping down and staring at him pointedly. "Hurry up! I don't have all night!" She huffed. Gilafang stayed standing, pacing around her with a lashing tail. *She will pay for making me kill.* He thought angrily.

"Let Wishpaw out. Let her go. Then we talk." He snarled. Morningstar rolled her eyes.

"Honestly, Gilafang, could you get any more mousebrained? I obviously won't do that, it breaks our deal...." She scoffed. "Why on earth would you demand *me* something? I am the leader of hell. I am more powerful than any cat," she purred.

Gilafang didn't falter. "Let. Her. Go. I refuse to be your puppet. You do your *own* dirty work! Or can you stand to get your *precious* paws dirty with blood? Are you afraid of getting caught? I can blab to *everyone* what you did. So I suggest you let my mate go before I foil your plans." He growled.

Morningstar growled, tail twitching. "You little twit!" She hissed through clenched teeth. The sky seemed to darken ten times darker, and thunder crackled. Morningstar grabbed Gilafang's ears and yanked him forward roughly, not bothering to be gentle. Gilafang felt his ears tear and blood trickled into his eyes. She shoved him into the cell that Wishpaw lay in, whimpering and sobbing. The wind had stopped, but she was oblivious.

Morningstar slammed the brambles in front of them. Her eyes were red wth anger. "You want her out? Get *yourself* out!" She screeched. "You've made a mistake, son! You have now unleashed my wrath on your whole clan, and I'll pick them off, one by one unless you find a way to stop me."

The sky went pitch dark and Gilafang cowered beside Wishpaw, licking her gently and wondering what on earth just happened.

Chapter 8

Sunsetpool came back from discussing with Lemurstar with a heavy heart. Lemurstar was much too delirious to make rational decisions, and Badgerfang had been busy. As dark fell and she returned to her den, she wasn't prepared for Pebblepaw's wide eyed face.

"Sunsetpool! Thank StarClan! It's Gilafang and Wishpaw! He went to sleep a little bit ago beside her and then he started to twitch and so I tried to wake him and then they both just stopped like someone switched them off and I can't wake either of them and Wishpaw is barely breathing!" Pebblepaw cried all in one breath, eyes wide. "What do I do?!" He was wailing, and he looked like he was on the verge of panic. Sunsetpool barely managed to catch his jumbled words, he was so frantic.

She followed him into the back of the den, where her brother was sleeping beside Wishpaw. They both looked fine, but when she inspected closer, she saw sweat on both cat's brow, worry creasing Gilafang's forehead. Wishpaw was barely breathing, and each breath was shallow and labored from her brother. She placed a paw on his forehead. It was cold. *Thats odd...* She thought, and licked his fur. "Try licking their fur backwards to warm them. Like in a kitting," she suggested, baffled and unsure of what else to do.

Pebblepaw hurried to do as he was told, worried for his father. The plain fear on his face was plastered like a sign on his brow, creasing it deeply. He licked his father vigorously.

Sunsetpool moved to Wishpaw, who was growing increasingly cold. She placed a paw on her chest and gasped. No heartbeat. She closed her eyes. *StarClan, don't do this now. Not now.* She prayed, placing her paws firmly on Wishpaw's still chest. She pounced all her weight on her patients ribs, over and over again in a steady pulse. After a few pulses, she bent down, holding her mouth open with her paws. Puffing breath into Wishpaw, she got up to her paws and began pouncing again.

It seemed moons before Wishpaw gave a feeble gasp, and to Sunsetpool's relief, her heartbeat returned, faint, but constant, and Sunsetpool let out the breath she hadn't realized she was holding. She looked at Pebblepaw, who was staring at her in awe. "How did you do that? She was... *Dead!"* He whispered, as if he had seen a ghost. Sunsetpool wiped the sweat from her forehead.

"I gave her heart a pulse to latch onto, and gave her lungs air. It's not easy, that's for sure. I've never done it before." Sunsetpool said in a shaky mew. "Thank StarClan it worked, huh?" Pebblepaw nodded.

Gilafang had started to breathe too, though very faintly, and Sunsetpool still couldn't wake him. There was nothing else she could do, which made her uncomfortable. She hated this new feeling. It made her feel helpless, and she didn't enjoy it.

Sunsetpool stepped outside to see Viperpaw running up to her, his eyes wide in distress.

"Sunsetpool! Sunsetpool, I can't wake Timberpaw!" He blurted out, tears in his eyes. "Can you help her? Please, she's my only sister, I can't bear to lose her-" he broke off, biting his lip. Sunsetpool rushed past him, to the apprentices den where Mosspaw sat, licking her friend. Timberpaw lay in her own nest, twitching and mewling, clawing at the ground. Sunsetpool bit her lip.

What is going on?! She thought. *Is this a sickness? I can't cure it! We'll be wiped out!* Worried, she looked at Viperpaw. "I'll take her to my den." Was all she could think to say.

*****

Gilafang lay in the dark beside his dear, dear Wishpaw, thinking of what he could possibly do to escape. He licked her forehead, and she leaned on his shoulder in response.

"Gilafang, I missed you," she whispered in a raspy voice. Her tear-stained face was illuminated in the faint, red moonlight. Gilafang silenced her by running his paws through her fur, kissing her forehead.

"Hush now, darling. You're safe now. It's alright." He said, licking her. "Shh..."

She snuggled closer to him, a wet droplet falling onto his paws. "It was horrible, Gilafang-" she breathed. "I saw y-you... And you tortured our kits... I watched you die over and over again, I don't think I'll ever feel pain like that again," she said quietly. "It can't be over soon enough."

Gilafang's heart broke to see her so broken. He buried his face in her fur and said nothing, closing his eyes. *I'll get us out of here, Wishpaw. I promise.*

Chapter 9

Gilafang lay in his makeshift nest beside Wishpaw, who was sleeping peacefully. The dark, bloodred moon shone above him through the branches, and the sky was star-less. Gilafang felt broken. *I messed up. I'm the biggest mess up, ever.* He thought sadly. *How will I ever get out?*

Suddenly two cruelly glowing eyes pierced the veil of darkness around him. Morningstar materialized, a hatred plastered on her face. She spat at Wishpaw, and Gilafang growled deep in his throat. "Go away." He said flatly, curling his tail closer around Wishpaw. "She needs rest."

Morningstar narrowed her eyes to slits. "Fine. I guess you don't want the very *important* information I was going to give you then!" She snarled viciously, and curled her lip, ready to depart. "I only came because I thought I should give you some bit of a chance."

Gilafang winced. *I don't need her.* He said to himself. He opened his mouth to shoo her away angrily, but stopped. *What if this information is important as she says?* Said a tiny voice in his head. *Think of Wishpaw... She deserves to get the best chance of escape, and, especially after what you did to Faithpaw, you* owe *her.* The thought brought pain to his heart. *Is he here? Did he come to StarClan? Is he watching us, sending hate and misfortune onto my soul because of what I did?*

I'm sorry, Faithpaw. He said desperately in his mind, hoping in some way it reached him. *What I did was horrible. But don't hurt Wishpaw. Hurt me. Punish me. Keep her safe, and I'll forever be in your debt.*

"Well? Which will it be?" Said a cutting voice. It was filled with poison.

Gilafang looked up into Morningstar's eyes. "Tell me." He growled, eyes slits. Morningstar crouched so she was level with Gilafang. Her hot, angry breath hit his nose.

"She isn't released, not yet. Your half moon is almost up." She whispered maliciously, a smile on her face. Gilafang looked at her warily, confused. When he didn't respond, Morningstar growled. "Ugh! I can't believe how *stupid* you've become!" She kicked him hard in the cheek, and Gilafang barely winced. "Almost as stupid as your *sister!* Honestly, Gilafang! Has she rubbed off on you?" Gilafang bristled, his eyes angry.

"Don't you ever say that about her. She is your *daughter* for StarClan's sake!!" Snarling, Gilafang threw himself against the branches in front of him, wanting desperately to maul her with anger. "Now *tell me!!"* His words echoed across the cell. Wishpaw still didn't wake.

Morningstar scoffed. "Don't speak of those *angelic* cats as if they are higher than me," she said. "They can't hear you. As for Wishpaw, our deal is still going. You don't find a way to escape before that moon is full, and she's dead. Haven't you noticed how weak she is? She can't stand. She'll be too sick to talk in a few days, and then her heart stops and her soul is *mine.*" She growled in Gilafang's face. "So you better hurry up."

Gilafang stared defiantly at his mother, but the thought dawned on him that Wishpaw still might die. *Not after I've worked so hard for her!* He cried in his head, but he kept a hard expression on his face, determined not to give his mother the satisfaction off seeing his heart's shattered pieces. When she finally walked away, Gilafang collapsed, his breathing ragged. He felt the tears prickling his eyes. He closed them, letting his tears flow freely. Nothing mattered anymore. Wishpaw was going to die. His kits would die. He would rot in this hellhole, and no one would know why.

*****

Sunsetpool watched Timberpaw twitch violently in her nest, crying out in fear. She, along with Badgerfang and Blackflower had fallen under the Nightmare Plague, which was the nickname that the clan had given this horrible disease. With the leader grieving and in no state to rule, and the deputy under the terrible sickness, the clan was virtually defenseless, as they were weak and losing warriors fast. On top of everything, Leaf Bare had come, and the first

snowfall had occurred that night. Sunsetpool sighed.

Suddenly Weaselfoot rushed in, tail lashing. His face was hard. "Sunsetpool, you'd better come out here." Being the last cat in command, she had to take over deputy duties. Sunsetpool nodded to Pebblepaw.

"Stay with the patients."

Pebblepaw nodded and Sunsetpool trotted outside, where she stopped dead in her tracks.

In front of her, crouching fearfully next to a flanking of Viperpaw and Firegaze and standing protectively over a caramel colored tortoiseshell, was Creamspots.

Chapter 10 (special)

?-POV-?

The dark she cat slipped farther back into the shadows, not noticing the dark squelch that sounded after she took her paws out of the bloodred much on the ground. She seemed comfortable, like she lived in the horrible, terrible place called the Dark Forest. The she cat chuckled, stepping up to Morningstar. "When shall we lead the attack?" She inquired, flexing her long, cruel and spindly claws into the soft dirt. Morningstar nodded in approval.

"You are a loyal second in command. You shall do good to lead the surprise battle patrol after I lead the first attack. We will attack in three moons at the halfway mark, while the medicine cats are out. Out nightmares should be strong enough by then for them to control the ones we chose." Morningstar said briskly. Then, her teeth flashed red and she purred. "I can't wait to see the look on that pathetic Lemurstar when her own daughter kills her. Then I'll go into StarClan myself and rid the world of her forever!!" She declared to the red sky.

The mysterious she cat placed her black paws on Morningstar's shoulders. "But what of the chosen one? What of the prophecy?" She asked, her eyes wide and serious. "If we can't destroy the Flower before the next half moon, we won't ever have a change to succeed. You know that." She said. Morningstar narrowed her eyes angrily, as if to scold the black she cat for ruining her relish. She scowled.

"You know I have that under control. There's no way my son will find a way to get out in time. Wishpaw will die along with the *flower*. There is no cat that has ever escaped my tree prison, and I don't expect it to start happening now." Morningstar snapped. The black she cat opened her mouth to speak, but Morningstar flicker her tail angrily as if to warn her. "Don't tell me that I'm forgetting that one close call. That doesn't count, mousebrain." She retorted with a growl, and the she cat nodded.

"Of course," she said, dipping her head. It was obvious she wanted to say more, but she held her tongue wisely.

Morningstar smiled, her bloodstained teeth gleaming. "And when we destroy their leader, you will step in, just as promised, and I will help you in training that despicable clan to be a well oiled army. Then we can conquer the whole forest!" The black she cat yowled with pleasure.

"We will be unstoppable!!" She crowed with delight, digging her long claws into the earth.

Morningstar smirked. "No one will stand in my way."

*****

I know, extremely short chap but this is a SPECIAL chap right? XD I'll get an new one up soon, no worries

Chapter 11

Sunsetpool held up her tail as Weaselfoot tried to lunge at him, a low, angry growl rising from deep in his throat. She flashed him an angry look. "No one is to hurt him!" She ordered, tail lashing. Viperpaw spoke up, his tail flicking.

"But he killed my best friend! And Lemurstar said he is to be killed if he is seen after his exile!" He countered, unsheathing his claws. Creamspots' fur rose and his eyes widened in panic.

"No! Please! I need your help, Turtleface is ill!!" He begged, his eyes sad. His ribs showed on his flanks, and his fur was ragged. Turtleface, groaning under him, was laying beside a single she kit, who was cowering in the snow, her rosy red tail fluffed up.

Sunsetpool stepped forward to nose Turtleface. Creamspots breathed a sigh of relief, closing his eyes and pulling the she kit closer. "I didn't kill Faithpaw, Sunsetpool-" he began in a hushed tone, his voice heavy with grief. Sunsetpool stopped him.

"I know. I believe you. But I can't bring you back until I know who really did it. I'm working on it, honest." She said, not looking up from Turtleface. Her forehead was hot with fever even in tue cold weather, and Sunsetpool scooped up a pawful of snow to place it on Turtleface's forehead. "This will cool her for the time being. Help me move her into my den," she said. Creamspots nodded.

When they had gotten inside, Creamspots coaxed the tiny kitten out from behind his tail. "Come on, Rose. It's alright," he said. Rose looked reluctant, wrapping her tail around her paws. She shook her head. She looked so tiny and delicate.

Bam. Like a brick, it hit her. *Rose...*

Sunsetpool could barely hold her excitement. "C-Creamspots-" she stammered, her eyes wide. "Creamspots, Rose is special!!" She blurted. Creamspots gave her a funny look, cocking his head. He

opened his mouth to ask a question but Sunsetpool beat him to it. "She's going to save us, I know it!!! She's the delicate flower that will save us all!!!"

As if on cue, Wishpaw gave a yowl, and she started to violently twitch. Her kits were due any day now. Gilafang started to mewl too, as if he were uncomfortable. Creamspots looked on with wide eyes, confused. But he stayed silent. Sunsetpool called for Pebblepaw.

"Yes, Sunsetpool?" He poked his head out of the store, herb dust settled on his nose. He shook his head, sending a cloud of dust around him. His eyes swept over a twitching Wishpaw and his eyes widened in understanding. He looked at Sunsetpool. "What do I do?" He asked seriously. Sunsetpool admired her determined apprentice. He had matured so much over the past moon.

"Get the kitting herbs. I think it's time," she said. No other explanation was needed. Pebblepaw nodded and ducked back into the store.

Creamspots stepped over to Sunsetpool. "What happened? Is Wishpaw kitting?" He asked, his eyes serious and concerned. Sunsetpool nodded.

"I'll tell you later. I need to deliver her kits!"

*****

Gilafang woke to Wishpaw's feeble yowl. He was immediately at her side. She was shaking heavily, and sweat poured down her temples. She looked up.

"G-Gilafang-" she wheezed, reaching up a shaking paw. "K-Kits..." Gilafang instantly knew. *The kits are coming....* He thought. *I have to get her out now.*

He narrowed his eyes. "I have to escape. You stay here, I don't know if the kits will come until you're awake," he said. He leaned down to nuzzle her. "I'll be back. I know where to go, but I'll need help. I'll bring someone, okay?" Wishpaw gave a feeble nod, and Gilafang

smiled. He pushed a stone out of the way, revealing a tiny tunnel he could just barely squeeze through. He had been working on it, and he was almost done. He squeezed to the end, and began to dig furiously.

It seemed like moons when he finally broke through. Concealed by the dead bush he was behind, he looked around for cats. The path was clear. Tail low, he crouched down and stuck to the shadows, thankful for his dark fur and the reek of blood.

He knew there was a lake in which you slipped through to get to the real world. He figured it would be heavily guarded, but that didn't stop him. If he didn't hurry, Wishpaw would die.

Finally the lake came into view. He saw the galaxy dappled pond, surrounded by dark, angry looking cats filled with scars. Gilafang gulped. *How will I get past?*

He had an idea. Searching the ground, he fumbled quietly around for a large stone. Taking it in his paws, he tossed it in the opposite direction he was headed. The guards immediately launched themselves forward, and Gilafang hurtled toward the lake. In one swift movement, he landed inside, and looked around to get his bearings.

He was near the big rocks on the beach. Knowing he had to hurry, he ran as fast as he could towards camp, yowling all the way.

"Help! The Dark Forest is rising, we need to be prepared!!!" He screamed. Shouts rose behind him, and he knew instantly the dark forest guards were behind him. He was almost to the camp. He was almost there. *Almost there.*

Suddenly there was an audible *pop* in his ears and the darkness slammed down on him.

Chapter 12

Sunsetpool whipped her head around wildly as a panicked gasp came from behind her. Wishpaw was whimpering in her sleep, and Pebblepaw was positioned near her rear, ready to car for the kits as soon as they arrived. Sunsetpool darted to her brother's side.

Gilafang's eyes were open and wide, and sweat poured from his brow. He stared at Sunetpool, gasping for breath. Sunsetpool licked his forehead in an effort to calm him. "Shh, Gilafang. What happened?! Are you okay?" She had to get the information quickly. She knew that Wishpaw was becoming weaker by the heartbeat, and if they didn't do something fast, she would die. Gilafang caught his breath.

"Sunsetpool! The Dark Forest is going to attack, they know I escaped..." He put a paw to his head, as if he were dizzy. "I d-don't understand! I was by the Big Rocks, and I thought Morninstar's guards got me... What happened?" He seemed genuinely confused. Sunsetpool ignored it, trying to make sense of his words.

"Our Mother is alive? But- Lemurstar killed her," she said, glancing at Wishpaw worriedly. Pebblepaw looked terrified.

"Sunsetpool, the kits aren't coming out! She need to be conscious to push!" He cried in a panic. Sunsetpool flattened her ears, unsure of what to do. *It's too soon! Oh StarClan, why must you be so harsh on us?! I can only do so much!!*

Sunsetpool took a deep breath. "Keep doing what you're doing, Pebblepaw. You are doing great." She said. Pebblepaw nodded, and, satisfied, Sunsetpool turned back to Gilafang. He was staring at Wishpaw in horror. Finally, he jumped to his paws.

"We need to go now!!" He cried, his eyes wide. "We need Lemurstar to come, and we need to go to StarClan!! *Hurry!!!"* He raced outside, heading towards the leader den. Sunsetpool muttered under her breath.

"Not now!!" She grumbled, looking at Pebblepaw. "Keep her alive until I come back. If worst comes to worst... Well-" Sunsetpool could barely say it. "Save the kits." Pebblepaw knew what she meant by this. His horrified expression showed it all, and he gulped.

If they didn't come back in time, the only way to save the kits was to cut them out of the belly.

*****

Gilafang flung himself to his paws, racing towards Lemurstar's den. *Wishpaw, I'm coming. Hold on, just hold on.* He was determined to right his wrongs. He burst inside. "Lemurstar!!! Lemurstar, I can save Wishpaw, but you have to hurry-" he broke off when he smelled the reek of blood. His heart beat faster. *Morningstar already attacked!!!* He thought, and began moving faster.

His paws hit the pool of blood before he saw anyone. Splashing through the puddle, he pushed through the den to see Lemurstar gasping for breath. Blood was everywhere and the den reeked of death. "Lemurstar!!" Gilafang screamed. "Lemurstar, what happened?!"

She looked up at him with sad, sad eyes. Her fave was streaked with tears and blood. "G-Gilafang... I'm s-so sorry!" She sobbed, her voice quiet. She was holding her stomach tightly, claws unsheathed. Gilafang's eyes widened in horror as he realized what she was intending to do.

He nosed her paws away gently, and looked straight in her eyes. "How many left?" He asked quietly, afraid of the answer. Lemurstar sobbed again. Then she broke into a thin, anguished wail.

"I-I was so c-close..... Why did you barge in?!" She sobbed, her paws shaking. "I want to see Faithpaw!!" Gilafang felt his heart break.

"No, Lemurstar! You-You are sick, you have to come with me," he nosed under her frail, bloody body. "Come with me, please..." Lemurstar struggled for a second, wailing miserably, until she realized Gilafang would only take go back for her. He made his way to Sunsetpool and set Lemurstar down.

"What in the name of the stars *happened?!"* Sunsetpool shreiked, her voice rising to hysteria. Gilafang sighed. He knew how stressed his sister was, being the sole leading role left in the clan, and fighting against an invisible illness. One more thing, and Gilafang wasn't quite sure how much more she would be able to take. He took a deep breath.

"She tried to kill herself, Sunsetpool. She has one life left. Keep her alive, I have to go!" He said, not knowing how else to tell her. His sister nodded and licked Lemurstar, and, satisfied, whipped around to gather the cats he needed for his quest.

•••••

Guys if you is confuzzled i will reveal what really happened later in the last few chapters.

Chapter 13

Morningstar hissed with rage. She unsheathed her claws in a blind fury and sliced the dark warrior's throat without warning, killing him instantly. "He let Gilafang get away!!!" She screamed as the body before her shimmered before disappearing from existence. Darksoul, her loyal deputy, nodded in agreement.

"This could ruin our whole plan!!" Morningstar continued, raging. Her eyes blazed and she glared at the remaining guard, who was shaking in his fur. "*Go!*" She screeched an order, making him jump. "You had better hope my shadow magic is strong enough to control our slaves, or you'll join your little friend. We attack now." She barked. With a flick of her tail she watched the terrified guard scramble away to collect his soldiers.

"It has begun. Darksoul, go with them. I shall conduct the last part of the attack from here."

Darksoul nodded, dashing after the guard. "Yes, Morningstar!" She said, and she was gone. Morningstar closed her eyes, concentrating on the shadows inside her.

Go. Be free, my shadows. Feed on those who wronged me. Control the night with screams and sorrow. Make Lemurstar wish she had never been born.

Morningstar opened her eyes, and all went black as the shadows consumed her.

*****

Gilafang burst into the warriors den. "I need you Firegaze! Weaselfoot, come too!!! We have to visit the Starlit Waterfall *now!!"* The two last warriors of DewClan looked up, bewildered.

"Are you crazy?! We are the last ones left and the clan is vulnerable. We have to stay behind and protect Drizzle and her kits!"

Weaselfoot cried angrily. Gilafang growled.

"Do you want Wishpaw and her kits to die?!" He challenged, his eyes blazing. "I need someone to come with to help me carry her!!! *Get moving!!!"* He screeched, unsheathing his claws. "I have to save her!!"

Weaselfoot looked scared. "Gilafang, w-what are you d-doing?!" He whispered.

"If you don't come, Wishpaw will die. I can free Badgerfang and Blackflower and Viperpaw too! Now will you *hurry* up?!" He whipped around and dashed out of the den, Weaselfoot following behind reluctantly. They raced towards the Starlit Falls, and Gilafang didn't stop until he was beside the sparkling water. "Jump in. I'll meet you at the other side. Once we get more help from StarClan we will go to the Dark Forest. Lay low and don't say a word. You'll die if you're caught, then the clan is doomed." He ordered. Weaselfoot's eyes widened and he nodded.

Gilafang slipped under the water. Instantly his paws prickled and he opened his eyes, he saw a concerned starry face above him.

Brightshine!!! Splashflight! He saw all the ever familiar faces around him of the cats his mother killed. *Spottedfern, Fallingfeather... Faithpaw...* A wave of guilt washed over Gilafang, but when their eyes locked Faithpaw smiled forgivingly. *He understands... Oh, thank you Faithpaw.* Suddenly an unfamiliar she cat stepped past the others. Her white fur had red mottles down her back, and her eyes were a piercing blue. Many other unfamiliar cats flanked her.

"Gilafang." She said in a gentle voice. "I am Aquastar. I understand you are the son of Morningstar? You are destined for great things, young man." She said, dipping her head deeply. "What do you need?"

Gilafang stared at her. *I am welcome here? After what I did?* He was shocked. "I-I... Uh..." He took a deep breath. "Aquastar... The Dark Forest is rising. They have captive half of our already small clan, one of which is my mate. She is kitting, and if we don't get her out soon, she will not make it, because she has to be in the waking

world to deliver." He explained, leaving out the minor detail that this was mainly *his* fault.

Aquastar nodded. "I know. Tell us what to do." She said, bowing her head. "Like I said, Gilafang. You are destined to lead us to justice to save the Flower." Her words confused Gilafang, but he nodded anyways.

"Right. Thank you. Here is what we need to do..."

*****

Gilafang slinked through the thick undergrowth, Aquastar by his side. He had directed most of the StarClan cats to reinforce DewClan, because he knew the attack had inevitably been moved up in his absence. That was best, for it left less cats to catch them sneaking around in the Dark Forest.

He led the way to the tree, where Blackflower, Wishpaw, Badgerfang and Viperpaw were being held. He first headed to Wishpaw. She lay in her nest, barely breathing. She was pale, cold, and her heart was barely beating. Gilafang felt his breath shallow and quicken in his throat as he smelled blood. *I'm too late!!*

Aquastar slipped through the branches easily, being a ghost, she could slip through any substance. Moving to Wishpaw's side, she examined her. Looking at Gilafang, her eyes were full of sorrow. "She is nearly dead, Gilafang. I am not sure she will make it, even if we get her home. Weaselfoot, carry her to the lake Gilafang told you about and run as fast as you can towards the camp. When she disappears that means she's woken," Aquastar said, slipping back through after opening the door. "Go, hurry!"

Weaselfoot nodded, and raced away awkwardly, carrying Wishpaw's limp body on his back. Gilafang bit his lip. *StarClan don't do this to me!* He thought, following Aquastar to the next cell. Blackflower.

This time, Blackflower was surrounded by a strong wind, whipping at her fur and dragging her down. She was wailing in pain and fear, clutching desperately at her ears as if trying to cover them. Gilafang

flattened his ears, imagining Wishpaw when she was in the nightmares. It was just as horrible, if not worse than now.

As Aquastar struggled against the wind to slip inside, Gilafang turned to glance behind him. When he returned his gaze to Blackflower, she had collapsed, and the wind had stopped. A thin wail wafted from the trees behind them, sending an eerie chill down Gilafang's spine. Aquastar turned to look up, her face filled with horror.

Gilafang turned around again, and he was met with a shadow, wailing like a banshee, filling his with an overwhelming sense of dread he couldn't shake. He turned, barely aware that Blackflower had gotten up, walked out, and shuffled down the road before his vision blurred in front of him, and he swayed on his paws.

Chapter 14

Sunsetpool jumped from her leader's side as she heard a cough behind her. Pebblepaw screeched. "Wishpaw!!" He cried out with joy, his face lighting up. Lemurstar swiveled her head weakly around, and managed to choke out a sob.

"Wishpaw!" She whispered, tears in her eyes. "Wishpaw, my beautiful daughter!"

Wishpaw's eyes were rolled in the back of her head, and she let out a weak moan. Sunsetpool raced to her side. "She's not safe yet, Pebblepaw." She said under her breath so Lemurstar wouldn't hear. "She is really weak." Sunsetpool brushed the hair from Wishpaw's eyes, trying to get her attention. "Wishpaw," Sunsetpool called. "Wishpaw, push!"

*****

Pain engulfed Wishpaw, and her head throbbed. She was numb with agony, but she couldn't lift a paw to brush it off. She was drowning in invisible liquids.

Her head lolled on her shoulders, and she opened her eyes, expecting to see the dark, dank cell that had been her home the past moon and a half. But when she opened them, she saw a blurry golden cat. She furrowed her brow, confused. When the golden cat spoke, it sounded echoey, and far, far, far away.

"Wishpaw..." It cooed, reverberating through the non-existent molasses around her. It was quiet and whispery, and she could barely decipher it.

"Wishpaw..." It called again. "Wishpaw.... Push!" Wishpaw wanted to protest, unsure of why she had to, but she felt her body compelled to do so anyways. She obeyed, and immediately a searing pain rippled across her body. Wishpaw wanted to scream, but her voice left her. She tried to writhe away, but she was

chained to the spot with fear. She wanted to stop, but it only made the agony more unbearable.

"Good, Wishpaw!" The voice praised, still faded and echoey. Wishpaw wanted to scream in pain. *I'm dying!!*

The pain stopped for a heartbeat, leaving Wishpaw gasping for breath. She unsheathed her claws.

This time the pain was softer, and the voice was quieter. "Wishpaw, keep... Pushing-!" It faded away slowly. Wishpaw felt the pain ebb and pulse, and it suddenly stopped. The world was black, and Wishpaw was sinking into the depths of sleep.

*****

"Pebblepaw, I'm losing her!!" Sunsetpool cried, shoving her apprentice aside to pounce on Wishpaw's chest. Pebblepaw led the two kits that had been successfully kitted away, while Sunsetpool worked furiously to revive Wishpaw. She stopped pouncing for a heartbeat to lean down, breathing into Wishpaw's mouth. After she gave a few puffs into her lungs, she then began to pounce more, a tiny wail erupted from in front of her, and she knew the third kit had been born.

One more. Sunsetpool thought. *One more. Please StarClan, give me this victory!*

As if on cue, Wishpaw gave a gasp, her eyes flew open wide. She started to pant, and howl, and Sunsetpool raced to the other side of her, ready to catch the last kit. It was stuck, it's leg caught on something. Sunsetpool bit her lip. *At least the pain will wake her more,* Sunsetpool thought before she grabbed the kit's tiny forepaws. As gently as she could, she tugged on it. Wishpaw screeched, but it still didn't budge.

StarClan, help me! I'm so close!!

She tugged again and Wishpaw screamed. Blood oozed onto the moss. Biting her lip, she took a deep breath, and tugged, *hard.* The kit squealed, and Wishpaw thrashed around, screeching and

begging for help. The kit finally broke free, but it's leg hung limply in the dirt. The rest of it wriggled around, trying to find it's mother, but the leg just stayed there, dead and limp.

StarClan, thank you. You saved them. Sunsetpool thought, wiping the sweat from her brow and reaching down to lick the kitten. Pebblepaw moved to soothe the sobbing Wishpaw, who was shaking. Sunsetpool nudged the kit towards it's mother.

"Look, Wishpaw," she soothed. "Look, your kits." She smiled gently, and Wishpaw turned her fear ridden face towards them, lighting up with pure joy and happiness.

"S-Sunsetpool... I-I'm a mom!" She croaked, her voice raspy with emotion. She buried her face in her paws and began to sob. "I'm a mom, I'm a mom!" She repeated again, as if she couldn't believe it. Sunsetpool smiled to herself before a scream made her whip around.

What now?!?! She cried, eyes wide.

Before her, standing on wobbly paws over her mother, was Blackflower, her paw raised to strike her down. Her eyes were glazed over, and she was moaning faintly.

Sunsetpool didn't think. She didn't think at all. Without a heartbeat of hesitaion, she lunged forward. "*No!"* She screeched, and in a split second, she saw a black paw slam down on her, and then-

Nothing.

****

You guys are gonna hate me. Oh god. *hides under table*

Chapter 15

Gilafang opened his eyes. Aquastar was shaking him. "Gilafang! Gilafang, wake up!" She said. Gilafang groaned, holding a paw to his dizzy head.

"What happened?" He asked, and suddenly the memories flew back to him. He shot up, and immediately fell back down as he hit a strong surge of vertigo. The world spun around him and he shook his head to clear it.

"Blackflower just got up and left. I went to go investigate, and I found Morningstar in the clearing, wailing." She said. "There were shadows coming out of her mouth. I-I think she made Blackflower go..." Gilafang stared at her, not comprehending her words.

"So? Why does that matter?" He asked, getting up more slowly this time. "Let's *go,* Aquastar! We have to follow them!" Aquastar barred his way with her tail.

"No way, Gilafang. Morningstar is using them to attack, don't you get it? She's controlling them, and she's vulnerable when she controls them. I walked right in front of her and she didn't see me." Gilafang stared at Aquastar.

"What?"

Aquastar sighed. "Gilafang, you need to go, to end this. I will follow you, but my strength is running thin. Being in the Dark Forest is killing my spirt. I have to leave soon, but I won't until I know you're safe." Gilafang tipped his head to one side. *Running thin?* Then he saw it. Aquastar was thinner than before. She was more see-through. And she was deteriorating by the second.

Gilafang nodded. "Ok. Let's go. We have to kill her to end this, Aquastar. Otherwise she'll just keep coming back. We have to end it once and for all."

*****

Aquastar followed after Gilafang, her paws aching. She felt faint, and she could barely stay upon her paws. Her head was cloudy.

"Aquastar, you go back, I can handle this," Gilafang spoke, but his voice echoed in her ears. Aquastar shook her head to clear it, but the vertigo that had attacked her was too strong. She stumbled a tiny bit.

"No, Gilafang. Not until I know you are safe. You have to find the Flower, even I don't know who she is. Please, listen to me," she insisted, closing her eyes in effort to steady herself.

Gilafang finally agreed, and they headed on. When they reached the clearing, Aquastar recognized it. "Here. She's just around the bend, Gilafang." She said to her grandson.

Gilafang nodded. "Ok. I'm safe. Now go, Aquastar, or you'll die!" He nosed himself under her and tried to push her towards StarClan. Aquastar shook her head, even though she knew her time was almost up.

"No." She said firmly. "Go, I'll be here the whole time, and I'll leave once you are safe," Aquastar said again. Gilafang opened his mouth to argue but he realized it wasn't worth it.

"Ok..." He finally sighed, and Aquastar nodded. He rushed away. Aquastar crouched in the bushes, watching intently. She knew he could handle it on her own. It was time to go.

She turned around, stumbling in the general direction of home. She was almost out of the bushes when a yowl erupted from the clearing behind her. Aquastar whipped around.

Gilafang!

Her head cleared. Her strength returned. She fairly flew on her paws. Racing towards the yell, she reached the clearing, and, seeing Gilafang locked helplessly in a pin under his mother, Aquastar acted.

She ran in front of Morningstar.

"Stop, Morningstar!!!" She scolded. Her eyes were narrowed with fury. She didn't notice her paws disappearing like mist in the wind. Her voice grew fainter by the second.

"What, *me?"* Morningstar cooed, her eyes wide and raised in mock surprise. Aquastar growled as she continued. "I have only been trying to give *you* justice on your wrongs to me!" There was a malicious snarl in Morningstar's voice. Tears of anger streamed suddenly down her face. "You *made* me into this, this *MONSTER!!!"* She screamed. The shadowed swarmed around her now, and parts of her tail and body were hanging off her in ragged bits. It was like the shadows had drained the last bit of sanity from her, and she was slowly withering away.

Aquastar growled and kicked Gilafang gently away from Morningstar, and into safety. "You want to fight? Let's fight."

*****

Gilafang woke with a throbbing head to a groan. The reek of blood hit his nose like a wave, and it sent him reeling. Another quiet, weak moan snapped him to his senses. Then he got up.

"Aquastar!"

The last thing he remembered before t got fuzzy was Aquastar pulling him out of his mother's grip, and then he blacked out. Now his mother was nowhere to be found and the reek of death was much more apparent than before. Aquastar's spirit was barely a shimmer on the ground, and it took Gilafang awhile before he found the source of the wheezing breaths below him. "Aquastar!"

Chapter 16

"G-Gila...fang..." Aquastar wheezed, her paws shimmering more, ever so slightly more as Gilafang neared. He tried to nose her but this time he went straight through her, as if she were mist. Shimmering particles danced away, part of Aquastar's left ear. It disappeared into the ground.

"Aquastar... Get up!" He said desperately, trying to get her up. But his paws went straight through her. "Get up, you'll die any second now! We have to get you home!"

Aquastar gave him a long, glazed over look. "I finally understand, Gilafang. The prophecy..." She said, taking in a shuddering breath.

Gilafang hushed her. "No, Aquastar. You can't do this. Please, get up! StarClan's forests aren't far!!" But she shook her head.

"No, Gilafang. I-It's too late for me. I have... Have to tell you something." Gilafang felt tears in his eyes.

"No," he moaned quietly. "Grandma, get up, please!" But Aquastar shook her head.

Now her voice was merely a whisper.

"M-My warrior... Name... Was Aqua... flower..." She whispered, and then her head fell back. Giladang sobbed, and just as his teardrop hit her shimmering pelt, she disappeared forever.

*****

Gilafang returned to the waking world with a heavy heart. He trudged into the Medicine den, to see a honey golden lump of fur laying on the ground. His heart was too twisted to comprehend.

"A-Aquastar died saving the clan. Her spirit is gone." He choked out. Wishpaw looked up. Her eyes were also streaked with tears. Blackflower stood a few tail lengths away with a distraught looking

face.

"Gilafang.... We have some bad news," Wishpaw whispered, her tail curled around four tiny kits. Gilafang raced over to her, and nuzzled her.

"You're alright! The kits are alright! How could you ever have bad news when you are alright?!" He purred into her fur. Wishpaw pushed him gently away.

"No, Gilafang. Blackflower, she-" Wishpaw was inturrupted when Blackflower broke into a fit of agonized sobs.

"I killed her, Gilafang! I killed Sunsetpool, I'm so sorry!!" She wailed, tears streaming down her face. Gilafang stared at her, not comprehending it. His face slowly twisted into anger, and he growled deep in his throat.

"What?" He snarled. Blackflower sobbed.

"I-I didn't mean to..... But, Gilafang!" She whispered as Gilafang lashed his tail. Blackflower bowed her head.

"I killed my parents too..."

*****

This is a short chap but I am afraid this is ending. I will put an epilogue up either today or tomorrow. I just want to say, I love you all so much and I really appreciate all the support and all the love through this series, and I couldn't thank you enough. These books wouldn't be made if it wern't for you.

Also, I want to dedicate this whole series to lexy1019 , because she actually asked me to start SM. This series wouldnt exist if it wern't for her. So thank you all. I love you, it's been an incredible journey.

My new series will be in a book list called "the lost warrior"

Dont worry, there wont be spoilers in the titles anymore lmao. I actually originally made sm into a super edition, thats why it

spoils.

But this will be a series. The book is called Mysterious Happenings.

Thank you all again. Ilysm.

Epilogue

"Are you ready, Gilafang?" Pebblestream whispered behind him. Gilafang looked to his side to stare lovingly at his adoptive son. He had come so far.

"Yes."

"Then lap up the water from below the waterfall," Pebblestream ordered gently, settling down.

Gilafang did as he was told, and lapped up the water. A trickle of what seemed to be pure ice surged gently down his throat, making him shiver. His vision toppled around, and he quickly settled into the dip in the ground before he closed his eyes.

The sensation was incredible. Gilafang felt like he was flying, falling, swirling, and filled with energy. Then he opened his eyes, and got to his paws.

"Welcome to StarClan, Gilafang." A familiar, gentle mew broke into his bubble of awe. He whipped around, and his eyes opened wide in joy. Tears filled his eyes instantly, and he ran to his sister.

"Sunsetpool, I'm so sorry..." He sobbed, nuzzling him. "I should have been there, it's all my fault." He murmured sadly, feeling the familiar crashing weight of guilt on his shoulders push down on him. It had been half a moon since the death of Sunsetpool, Badgerfang, and Lemurstar. The clan had no deputy, so they had to wait for a sign from StarClan. Pebblestream had found a lizard fang while cleaning out Lemurstar's old den, and the Clan had all agreed what it meant.

Sunsetpool licked her brother, her sad, scared posture gone and replaced with confidence, her pelt shining with a million twinkling stars. "No, brother. Let me go, you saved the Clan, I was just a casualty in the process." She said gently. "I am safe. We have something more important to do," she purred with joy.

Gilafang suddenly felt a surge of fear. His heart thumped harder. *What if I mess it all up?* He thought in despair. But his thoughts vanished when Sunsetpool nodded to him, and he lifted his chin, his whole body tingling with exhilaration. A cloud of star-pelted cats surrounded him.

"With this life I give you the bravery to run the other way. Running from something, in the right circumstances, is not cowardice. Sometimes you have to back down in order to win the battle." Sunsetpool yowled, loud and clear. She touched her small nose to Gilafang's, and he felt the bright power of bravery. His pelt shivered with fear and his fur stood on end. He felt like he was constantly in danger, yet that made him feel powerful. He puffed out his chest. Suddenly non-existent wind ruffled his fur and he felt happy, relieved, as if the answers to his problems were becoming clear as he ran the other way.

Sunsetpool licked her brother one last time, and stepped back into the crowd. Gilafang watched her go, his eyes filling up with tears. *My little sister... I was supposed to keep her safe...* He thought with a sad sniffle, and he wiped his muzzle quickly. The cat that replaced his sister was a black and white tom, with ice blue eyes that cut into Gilafang. His head only came up to Gilafang's shoulder, yet his muzzle was flaked with age.

Splashflight.

"Greetings, Gilafang. The last time I saw you, you were an apprentice," he said with a grin "Now look at you! You're leader!" He gave a small chuckle.

"Not yet," Gilafang said with a twinkle in his eye. He smiled back.

"Of course," Splashflight said, stepping forward. "With this life, I give you the wisdom to follow your heart. It may not always lead you on the easiest path, my friend," Splashflight said with a short glance towards the cats around them. His eyes were full of longing. "But trust me. It's the path that StarClan wants, and it it well worth whatever they tell you," he said. "You may make mistakes, Gilafang, but StarClan has something great for you, just as they did me."

The life surged through him, leaving Gilafang breathless. Splashflight stepped down, letting a magnificent she cat through. They shared a quick moment of embrace before the orange tabby smiled at Gilafang.

"You may not remember me, Gilafang. I was killed by your mother when you were just a kit." She said with a warm smile. She brushed the long fur out of her face to reveal an indent in her face instead of a second eye.

"Brightshine!" Gilafang purred. She nodded.

"With this life, I give you the courage and ferocity of a mother's love. Use it to guard your Clan with all nine lives just as I used it to keep safe my precious daughter." Brightshine murmured. She toughed his nose and his pelt burned. Electricity zapped through him and he gasped for breath, not expecting the ferocity of this life. *There is nothing more strong than a mother's love,* Gilafang noted, as he struggled to his paws.

The next cat was a tiny speckled grey tom, his kit fluff still showing as he scampered up to meet Gilafang. Gilafang laughed. "Hello, little one, and who might you be?" He asked.

"I'm Rainpatter, Brightshine's firstborn son. Morningstar killed me at birth because I was too small," he squeaked. Gilafang winced, closing his eyes. *I'll never be free of that guilt...* He thought, and forced another smile.

"With this life I give you spirit and joy!" Rainpatter squealed with happiness. "Never let your spirits down no matter how bad things get!" With that, he promptly collided noses with Gilafang, and a bubble of happiness and energy burst inside of him. He purred with amusement as Rainpatter bounded back to his mother.

The next cat was a sleek, black cat that took Gilafang by surprise. He opened his mouth wide. "C-Claw?" He gasped, memories of the sour tom flooding his mind. Claw purred.

"Yes. I found myself in this place when I died. Since I have known you and have a special connection to you, I was allowed to watch

over you and my kits..." His eyes flickered to Pebblestream, and they filled with tears. Pebblestream's eyes filled too.

"Hi... Dad," he choked quietly. Claw nodded with a quiet sob, and closed his eyes. Then he turned back to Gilafang.

"With this life I give you patience. Patience to wait for your time to be with your parted beloved ones is a hard thing to possess, but I know you can do it." He touched Gilafang's nose, and went to go stand by his son, licking his pelt.

The next cat was a small, delicate honey colored she cat. Gilafang recognized her at once. This was the cat who had made him realize what a monster his mother was.

"Yewpaw... I'm so sorry." Gilafang began. "I should have stopped her." Yewpaw purred, and shoved him over.

"Naw, its no big deal! I'm happy here, with my mother and father," she purred. "They joined StarClan shortly after you went to the Dark Forest," she said. Then she purred. "Now shut up ya big lump and let me give you a life!" She joked, stepping forward.

Gilafang had forgotten how fun Yewpaw was. He purred.

"With this life I give you mentoring. Use it to teach your clan in new, creative ways. Use it well, it is an important skill to have," she said seriously, touching her nose gently to his. Knowledge surged through every hair on his pelt, nearly knocking him over. He regained his balance, overwhelmed with the feeling of power. For a moment, every answer to every question burned through him, every piece of knowledge ever thought was in his mind, whirling around and banging his skull, but then the feeling vanished. He panted, gasping for breath.

"You're doing great, Gilafang," said an achingly familiar voice. Gilafang looked up. Before him stood Badgerfang and Lemurstar, both sparkling. Strong and young, Lemurstar had lost the hollow look in her eyes, the skin that once was hanging off of her in sags, was now healthy and tightly wrapped around her. He could no longer count her ribs, and the blood was gone. Gilafang felt an ache

in his chest.

"How will I ever become such a great leader as you, Lemurstar?" Gilafang pleaded, his eyes wide in worry. "I'll screw it up, why did StarClan choose me?"

Lemurstar nodded to Badgerfang, who stepped forward. He smiled. "Because I know you can do it," he said.

"With this life I give you endurance through the hardest things in life. Things may seem bleak, but they will always get better," Badgerfang said. His life surged through Gilafang quickly.

Now it was Lemurstar's turn. Her eyes flickered with sadness. "I give you two lives, because Aquastar is not here to greet you," she said sadly. Gilafang bowed his head, remembering Aquastar, leader before Morningstar. She had been the flower that saved everyone, but in doing so it killed her spirit.

"With these lives I give you wisdom and sacrifice. Sometimes you will have hard decisions to make. And sometimes, in Aquastar's case, you must make sacrifices to save those you love. Do not hesitate." Lemurstar touched her nose to his twice, the last two lives surging through him like a claw.

"StarClan, I give you this noble cat. He has bravely fought against monsters beyond our belief. He has given everything for his clan." Lemurstar yowled. "I bring him before you to have the gift of your blessing. He has been given his nine lives of a leader. From this moment until the end of time, let him be known as Gilastar, the brave and wise."

"Gilastar! Gilastar!"

END